

in a sandwiched composite mat 122 with the other three screen layers 114, 118 and 120 (see S108). In preferred embodiments, the coarse and fine screens 114, 118 and 120, and the non-woven mat 116 are formed from stainless steel. However in alternative embodiments different metals such as titanium, nickel, Carpenter 20 Cb-3, Hastelloy R or X, or the like may be used with the choice being dependent on the filtering environment and the materials to be filtered.

IN THE ABSTRACT:

Please replace the paragraph beginning on line 2 and ending on line 13 of page 16 with:

A metallic filter for filtering a fluid includes a filter element. A structure of the filter element is strengthened by a heat treatment after assembly to resist P pressure changes in the fluid to minimize irreversible compression and degradation of the filter element due to the partial collapse of the filter element from a rise in the P pressures of the fluid passing through the filter element. Preferably, the filter element includes a non-woven, metallic mat. Also, the filter element include at least two metallic support screens, and the non-woven metallic mat is sandwiched between the at least two metallic support screens. In addition, the filter element is preferably formed from a material selected from stainless steel, titanium, nickel, Carpenter 20 Cb-3, Hastelloy R and Hastelloy X. Further, the filter element is pleated and formed to surround a support member, and the heat treatment after assembly occurs after pleating and forming. In addition, the non-woven metallic mat includes metallic fibers, and is also heat treated before assembly to provide a first bonding of the metallic fibers.